CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1.   A closed loop system for delivering information obtained from an information content source to a playback device, comprising:

a mobile-content server comprising:

a website interconnected to the information content source, operating on the mobile-content server and available for access by a user;

a database for storing, among other things, user information; and

a server application operating on the mobile-content server and enabling the mobile-content server to:

retrieve the user information from the database;

obtain content segments from the information content source;

create a content package including at least one content segment;

deliver the content package to a client platform; and

receive response information from the client platform, the response information being associated with at least one content segment; and

the client platform comprising:

a web browser for interacting with the website operating on the mobile-content server; and

a client application operating on the client platform and

enabling the client platform to:

download the content package from the mobile-

content server to the playback device;

receive response information from the playback

device; and

deliver the response information to the mobile-content

server. .

2.   The closed loop system of claim 1, wherein the server application

operating on the mobile-content server, further enables the mobile-content

server to convert information obtained in a textual data format from the

information content source into an audio format.

3.   The closed loop system of claim 1 wherein the mobile-content

server further comprises an advertising database for storing advertisement

segments.

4.   The closed loop system of claim 3 wherein the server application

creates the content package by aggregating content segments and placing

advertisement segments from the advertising database juxtaposed between each

respective non-advertising content segment.

5.   The closed loop system of claim 4 wherein the server application

selects the advertisement segments from the advertising database based, at least

in part, on the user information.

6.   The closed loop system of claim 1 wherein the server application assigns a unique identifier to each content segment and maintains a database of unique identifiers and associated content segments.

7.   The closed loop system of claim 1 wherein user information comprises name, company, email address, shipping address, delivery address, and credit card information of the user.

8.   The closed loop system of claim 1 wherein user information includes preference information comprising specific content and content categories.

9.   The closed loop system of claim 1 wherein the user information includes scheduling information and the server application retrieves information from an information content source and creates the content package based on the scheduling information.

10.   The closed loop system of claim 1 wherein the user information includes scheduling information and the server application delivers the content package to the client platform based on the scheduling information.

11.   The closed loop system of claim 1 wherein the client platform delivers the content package based on a user's request generated at the client platform.

12.   The closed loop system of claim 1 wherein at least one of the content segments includes textual data.

13. The closed loop system of claim 1 wherein at least one of the content segments includes audio data.

14. The closed loop system of claim 1 wherein at least one of the content segments includes video data.

15. The closed loop system of claim 1 wherein the mobile-content server and the client platform are included within a single computer system.

16.   An information gathering, delivery and playback system for providing custom information, including directed advertising, to a playback device, the information being obtained from an information source, the system comprising:

a mobile-content server communicatively coupled to the information source;

a client platform, communicatively coupleable to the mobile-content server and the playback device;

the mobile-content server being operative to:

receive a request for custom information from the client platform;

gather information from the information source in accordance with the received request for custom information;

deliver the custom information to the client platform;

the client platform being operative to deliver the custom information to the playback device when the playback device is accessible by the client platform.

17.   The system of claim 16 wherein the client platform is further operative to receive response information from the playback device and provide the response information to the mobile-content server, the response information being included as part of the request for custom information.

18.   The system of claim 16, wherein the custom information includes electronic mail messages.

19.   The system of claim 16, wherein the custom information includes news stories.

20.   The system of claim 16, wherein the custom information includes musical performances.

21.   The system of claim 16, wherein the custom information includes recorded music.

22.   The system of claim 16, wherein the custom information includes sporting event broadcasts.

23.   The system of claim 16, wherein the custom information includes radio broadcasts.

24.   The system of claim 16, wherein the custom information includes weather information.

25.   The system of claim 16, wherein the custom information includes financial information.

26.   The system of claim 16, wherein the custom information source is a website accessible through the Internet.

27.   The system of claim 16, wherein the custom information source is a recorded media playback source.

28. An information gathering, delivery and playback device for providing user discernible custom information and directed advertising information, both being obtained from at least one information source, the playback device comprising:

an information source interface;

a memory storage unit;

a processing unit coupled to the memory storage unit and the information source interface, the processing unit, in response to instructions stored in the memory storage unit, being operative to:

access the information source over the information source interface;

extract custom information from the information source based on preference information stored in the memory storage unit;

receive directed advertising information from the information source; and

convert the custom information and advertising information into a format suitable for being played back in a user discernible manner.

29.   The device of claim 28 wherein at least a subset of the custom information and advertising information received from the information source is received as raw information and the processing unit is operative to convert the subset of custom information and advertising information by:

converting the raw information into one or more content segments; and

combining the content segments to generate a content package.

30.   The device of claim 28 wherein the custom information is received from the information source in the form of one or more content segments and the processing unit is operative to convert the custom information and advertising information by combining the content segments to generate a content package.

31.   The device of claim 28 wherein the custom information and advertising information is received from the information source in the form of a content package, and the processing unit is operative to convert the custom information and the advertising information by storing the content package in the memory storage unit.

32.   The device of claim 28 wherein the information source is an electronic media storage device.

33.   A method for providing directed information, including advertising and non-advertising content, to a playback device based on a closed loop operation, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving user information;

obtaining directed information from one or more information sources based at least in part on the user information;

formatting the directed information into a content package, the content package including one or more content segments;

assigning a unique identifier to each content segment within the content package;

delivering the content package along with the unique identifier for each content segment of the content package to the playback device; and

receiving response information from the playback device, the response information including the unique identifier of the content segment associated with the response.

34.   The method of claim 33, wherein the step of obtaining directed information from one or more information sources comprises the steps of:

parsing the user information to obtain a schedule; and

accessing an information source to obtain information in accordance with the schedule.

35.   The method of claim 33, wherein the step of obtaining directed information from one or more information sources comprises the steps of:

parsing the user information to obtain a search term;

searching the Internet based on the search term to identify an information source containing information related to the search term; and

initiating the download of the information related to the search term.

36.   The method of claim 33, wherein the step of obtaining directed information from one or more information sources comprises the steps of:

parsing the user information to obtain a search term;

searching the Internet based on the search term to identify an information source containing information, in a raw data format, related to the search term; and

initiating the download of the information related to the search term.

37.   The method of claim 35, wherein the step of formatting the information into a content package comprises the step of converting the information from the raw data format into one or more content segments.

38.   The method of claim 33, wherein the step of obtaining directed information from one or more information sources comprises the steps of:

parsing the user information to obtain a search term;

searching the Internet based on the search term to identify an information source containing information, in the format of one or more content segments, related to the search term; and

initiating the download of the information related to the search

term.

39.   The method of claim 33, wherein the step of obtaining directed

information from one or more information sources comprises the steps of:

parsing the user information to identify the directed information to

be obtained;

identifying an Internet accessible address of an information source

containing the directed information in the format of one or more content

segments; and

initiating the download of the directed information.

40.   The method of claim 33, wherein the step of obtaining directed

information from one or more information sources comprises the steps of:

parsing the user information to identify the directed information to

be obtained;

identifying an Internet accessible address of an information source

containing the desired information in a raw data format; and

initiating the download of the desired information.

41.   The method of claim 39, wherein the step of formatting the

information into a content package comprises the step of converting the

information from the raw data format into one or more content segments.

42. The method of claim 33, wherein the step of obtaining directed information from one or more information sources comprises the steps of:

parsing the user information to identify the directed information to be obtained;

identifying an Internet accessible address of an information source containing the desired information in the format of a content package; and

initiating the download of the desired information.

43. The method of claim 33, wherein the step of obtaining directed information from one or more information sources comprises the step of obtaining information based at least in part on the response information.

44. The method of claim 33, wherein the step of delivering the content package obtaining directed information from one or more information sources comprises the steps of:

parsing the user information to obtain a delivery schedule; and

delivering the content package in accordance with the delivery schedule.

45.   A mobile application server comprising:

a website accessible to a user for inputting user information comprising a user name, profile information, preference information, and scheduling information;

a user database for storing the user information; and

a server application for retrieving the preference information, retrieving web content from a content source, creating information content segments for the user based at least in part on the preference information and the web content, creating a content package, and delivering the content package to a playback device, said server application further functional to receive response information from the playback device and initiate actions based on the response information.

46.   The mobile application server of claim 45 wherein the server application is further functional to convert textual data to audio data.

47.   The mobile application server of claim 45 wherein the mobile application server further comprises an advertising database for storing advertisement content segments that include audio advertisements.

48.   The mobile application server of claim 47 wherein the server application creates the content package by aggregating information content segments and advertisement content segments juxtaposed between each information content segment.

49.   The mobile application server of claim 48 wherein the server application selects the advertisement content segments for placement based at least in part on the user information.

50.   The mobile application server of claim 45 wherein the server application assigns a unique identifier to each information content segment and maintains a database of unique identifiers and associated information content segment.

51.   The mobile application server of claim 45 wherein the server application assigns a unique identifier to each advertisement content segment and stores that unique identifier in the advertisement database associated with the advertisement content segments.

52.   The mobile application server of claim 45 wherein profile information comprises the company, email address, shipping address, delivery address, and credit card information of a user.

53.   The mobile application server of claim 45 wherein preference information includes desired content and content categories.

54.   The mobile application server of claim 45 wherein the server application retrieves web content, creates information content segments and creates content packages based on the scheduling information of a user.

55.   The mobile application server of claim 45 wherein the web content comprises textual, audio and video data.

56.   A method of delivering content and receiving responses to the content, wherein the content includes web based information, the method comprising the steps of:

aggregating a content package, the content package including at least one content segment;

delivering the content package to a playback device;

receiving a response from the playback device, the response being associated with a particular content segment; and

initiating actions based on the responses.

57.   The method of claim 56 wherein the step of aggregating a content package further comprises the step of inserting at least one advertising content segment into the content package.

58.   The method of claim 57 wherein the step of inserting an advertising content segment further comprises the steps of:

examining a user's profile information; and

selecting and advertising content segment based at least in part on the user's profile information.

59.   The method of claim 58 further comprising the step of:

crediting the user with points as a function of the information that the user supplies in the user's profile information.

60.   The method of claim 59 further comprising the step of:

redeeming the user's points for cash.

61. The method of claim 60 further comprising the step of:

redeeming the user's points for discounts with advertisers.

62. The method of clam 56 wherein the step of aggregating a content package further comprises the steps of:

examining a user's preference information; and

gathering web based information as content segments based, at least in part, on the user's preference information.

63. The method of claim 56 wherein the step of delivering the content package to a playback device further comprises the step of examining a user's schedule information and delivering the content package to the user based, at least in part, on that schedule information.

64. The method of claim 56 wherein the step of delivering the content package to a playback device further comprises the step of receiving a content package delivery request from the playback device and downloading the content package in response to said request.

65.   A method of generating personalized content packages for delivery to and playback on a playback device, the content packages including advertising content segments and non-advertising content segments, comprising the steps of:

receiving user profile information for a particular user;

storing the user profile information;

receiving advertisement content segments from at least one advertiser, the advertising content segment including target profile information;

storing the advertisement content segments along with the target profile information;

selecting the advertisement content segments for a particular user based, at least in part, by comparing the target profile information and the user profile information; and

inserting the selected advertisement content segments into a content package to be downloaded to the playback device.

66.   The method of claim 65, wherein the user profile information includes user preference information, further comprising the step of inserting non-advertisement content segments based on the user's preference information.

67.   The method of claim 66, wherein the user preference information includes at least one category selection, and the step of inserting non-advertisement content segments further comprises inserting non-advertisement segments based on the category selections.

68. The method of claim 65 further comprising the step of receiving response information from the playback device and wherein the step of selecting the advertisement content segments further comprises the step of selecting the advertisement content segments based, at least in part, on the response information.

69. The method of claim 63 wherein the step of receiving advertisement content segments from at least one advertiser further comprises the steps of:

permitting advertisers to access a website;

receiving advertisement content segments from advertisers when the advertisers initiate an upload of the advertisement content segments.

70. The method of claim 65 wherein the step of receiving advertisement content segments from at least one advertiser further comprises the steps of:

permitting advertisers to access a website;

receiving advertisement content segments from advertisers when the advertisers initiate an upload of the advertisement content segments;

charging a fee to the advertisers based on the type of responses that the advertisement can support.

71. The method of claim 65 further comprising the step of:

crediting the user with points as a function of the information that the user supplies in the user's profile information.

72.   The method of claim 71 further comprising the step of:

redeeming the user's points for cash.

73.   The method of claim 71 further comprising the step of:

redeeming the user's points for discounts with advertisers.

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